

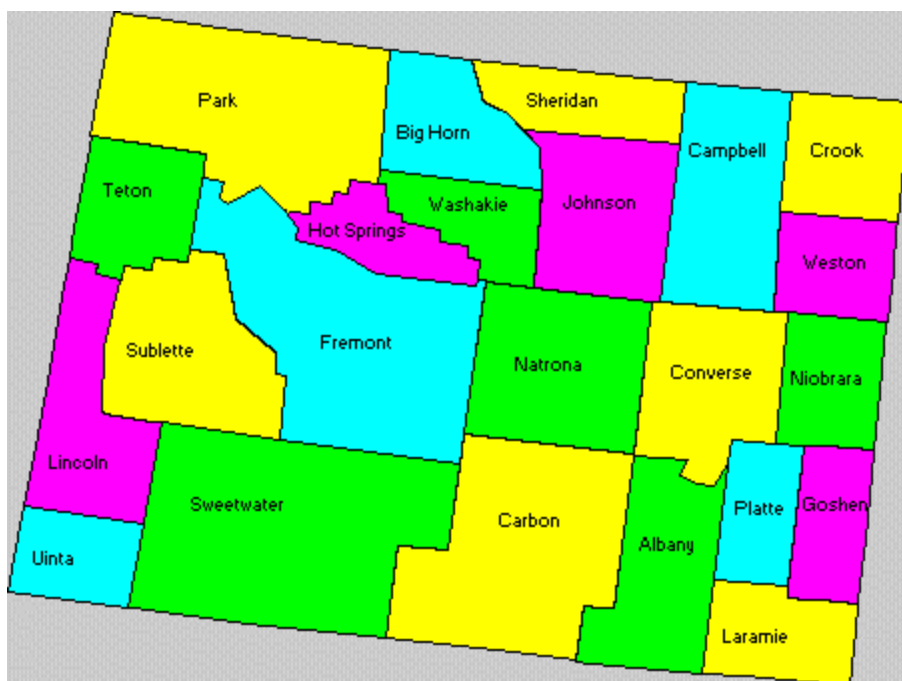
Office of National Drug Control Policy

Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

Wyoming

Profile of Drug Indicators

May 2000



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

Wyoming

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

Demographics¹

- Population: 453,588 (1990 Census), 480,000 (1999 estimate)
- Gender: 50.05% male, 49.95% female
- Age: 26.9% Under 18 years old, 11.5% 65 years or older
- Race/Ethnicity: 94.2% White, .8% Black, 2.1% American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut, .6% Asian or Pacific Islander, 5.7% Hispanic Origin
- Percent of population below poverty level: 10.6%

Political²

- U.S. Senators: Craig Thomas (R), Michael Enzi (R)
- U.S. Representative: Barbara Cubin (R).
- Governor of Wyoming: Jim Geringer (R).
- Wyoming Attorney General: Gay Woodhouse (R)
- Director, Wyoming Department of Health: Don Rolston.
- Director, Wyoming Department of Corrections: Judith Uphoff.

Programs/Initiatives³

- The Rocky Mountain HIDTA was designated in 1996 and consists of the States of Colorado, Utah and Wyoming. The counties of Albany, Campbell, Laramie, Natrona, and Sweetwater from Wyoming participate in the HIDTA. The region contains 7 interstate highway systems. Interstates 15 and 25 pass through the region along north-south axis while Interstates 70, 76, 80 and 90 run east and west. This system, along with the various federal, state and county road networks totals some 21,667 street/highway miles. Much of the drugs entering the three-state region of Colorado, Utah and Wyoming are transported by private and commercial vehicles via the aforementioned road network. The principal source locations for illegal drugs entering the region are California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. Source cities include Los Angeles, San Francisco, El Paso, Phoenix, Tucson and Las Vegas. Programs of the HIDTA involving Wyoming directly include:
Wyoming Central Enforcement Team (CEET)
CEET began operations during the first quarter of 1997. It is comprised of 13 officers from 4 different agencies that include the Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation, the Natrona County Sheriff's Office, the Douglas Police Department and the Casper Police Department. During FY1999, CEET arrested 65 suspects, dismantled 2 major trafficking organizations, seized 3 methamphetamine laboratories and took part in 5 interdiction investigations.
Wyoming Northeast Enforcement Team (NEET)
NEET is a newly formed Rocky Mountain HIDTA task force. It is comprised of 9 officers from 5 different agencies that include the Wyoming Division of Criminal

Investigation, the Campbell County Sheriff's Office, the Gillette Police Department, the Sheridan Police Department and the Sheridan County Sheriff's Office.

Wyoming Southeast Enforcement Team (SEET)

SEET began operations during the first quarter of 1997. It is comprised of 10 officers from 6 different agencies that include the Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation, the Laramie County Sheriff's Office, the Cheyenne Police Department, the Laramie Police Department, the Torrington Police Department and the Wheatland Police Department. During FY1999, SEET arrested 86 suspects, dismantled 2 major drug trafficking/money laundering organizations, seized 1 methamphetamine laboratory and took part in 8 investigations outside of the Rocky Mountain HIDTA region.

Wyoming Southwest Enforcement Team (SWET)

SWET began operations during the first quarter of 1997. It is comprised of 10 officers from 6 different agencies that include the Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation, the Carbon County Sheriff's Office, the Evanston Police Department, the Green River Police Department, the Sweetwater Police Department and the Uinta County Sheriff's Office. During FY1999 SWET arrested 106 suspects, dismantled 4 major drug trafficking organizations, seized 6 methamphetamine laboratories and conducted 5 interdiction investigations.

Wyoming Investigative Support Team (IST)

IST provides intelligence and analytical support to the drug enforcement teams, operates the WYLEIN intelligence database and functions as a satellite for the RMHIDTA Investigative Support Center in Denver.

- During FY 1999 ONDCP in conjunction with OJJDP awarded The Wind River Health Promotion Program in St. Stephen's, Wyoming an award of \$94,133.00 under the Drug Free Community Support Program. Funds will be used to reduce and prevent substance abuse among the Native American tribal population of the Wind River Indian Reservation. The focus of the program is to engage the Indian community to help establish a positive environment for change through tradition and custom. The program will address the areas of education, early identification, diversion, intervention, and treatment. Task forces will be created to examine the services offered and the gaps that are currently in existence.⁴
- There are 3 drug courts in the following locations in Wyoming: Sheridan County, Uinta County, and Evanston.⁵

Crime and Drug-Related Crime

- Of the 2,244 arrests for drug violations in 1998, 553 were for offenders under the age of 18.⁶

Arrests in the state of Wyoming 1998

Offense	Total All Ages	Under 18
Murder and Non-negligent Manslaughter	8	-
Forcible Rape	38	4
Robbery	34	6
Aggravated Assault	491	63
Burglary	471	157
Larceny/theft	2,734	1333
Motor Vehicle Theft	175	102
Arson	30	23
Drug Abuse Violations	2,244	553
Driving Under the Influence	4,353	96
Liquor Laws	5,768	2,085
Drunkenness	1,711	62

Drugs⁷

Marijuana

- Because of the higher potency of Canadian marijuana and the increasing exportation of marijuana products from Canada, it is expected that authorities will continue to see an increase of Canadian marijuana and marijuana-related products in the Rocky Mountain region. Concealment methods continue to be traditional, including transporting the marijuana inside duffel bags in the trunks and cargo areas of vehicles. Marijuana seizures are valued at more than \$516,000. The total quantity of the marijuana seized to date exceeds 1,197 pounds. This represents a decrease of plant seizures for 1997.

Methamphetamine

- *Prevalence:* According to the latest information available, methamphetamine abusers accounted for 16% of all state supported substance abuse treatment admissions in Wyoming in 1996. Not only is the State of Wyoming seeing an increase in methamphetamine users, it is also seeing a trend toward younger users. Wyoming teens are more than twice as likely to have used methamphetamine in the past year compared to other teenagers nationwide. On average, one in every 20 Wyoming high school seniors has used methamphetamine in the past month. Furthermore, the use of methamphetamine by Wyoming teenagers greatly exceeds the national level. In a current study of over 1,000 women seeking health care services in Wyoming, current smokers in the study were 1.3 times more likely to be current alcohol users, 6.9 times more likely to be current marijuana users and over 13 times more likely to be current methamphetamine or cocaine users. Over the past decade, drug-induced hospital discharges have increased 42% in the State of Wyoming. The number of methamphetamine abusers admitted for inpatient hospital care has increased fourfold. Much of this growth has been credited to the dramatic increase in methamphetamine

abuse across Wyoming. With the rise in the popularity of smoking methamphetamine as opposed to injecting it, the natural resistance to using needles is by-passed, and more people are using the drug. Methamphetamine arrests for the State of Wyoming account for over half of all drug-related arrests, which is up 280% since 1993 (Pending semi-annual reports).

- *Price and Purity:* The DEA-Rocky Mountain Field Division, reports methamphetamine prices for the State of Wyoming and as it compares to the States of Colorado and Utah:

Methamphetamine Price/Purity Colorado, Utah, and Wyoming

	Gram	Ounce	Pound
Colorado	\$80-\$125	\$800-\$1,400	\$9,000-\$20,000
Utah	\$25-\$120	\$600-\$800	\$9,000-\$12,000
Wyoming	\$100	\$1,000-\$1,200	\$24,000-\$30,000

Source: Rocky Mountain HIDTA 1998 Threat Assessment Survey

- Of the Wyoming HIDTA agencies that responded to the 1998 Threat assessment Survey, and that also reported prices for methamphetamine, 50% reported no change at all in price. Purity levels for methamphetamine range from 5% to 95%. Rock Springs Police Department reports an increase in the use of methamphetamine intravenously.
- *Drug-Related Deaths:* Drug-induced mortality is the least common substance abuse-related cause of death in Wyoming, however, it is the fastest growing. Over the past decade, drug induced mortality has increased 50% in the state, although it has remained below the national average. According to the Wyoming Department of Health, deaths of Wyoming residents that relate to methamphetamine, in 1997, 1 was categorized as accidental, 3 were suicides, and 2 were undetermined (also grouped with marijuana).
- *Clandestine Laboratories:* Wyoming is sparsely populated, which presents an excellent setting for laboratories in the state. In 1998, Wyoming experienced a proliferation in the number of smaller clandestine methamphetamine laboratories. 12 laboratories were seized statewide in 1998 by the Division of Criminal Investigation, compared to only 3 seized in 1997. Of the 12 laboratories seized, 4 were located in residences, 3 were located in apartment buildings and 1 each was located in a commercial building, a house trailer, a motel, a motor vehicle, and in a shed/building. These laboratories were capable of producing multi-ounce to pound quantities of methamphetamine. 4 of the laboratories were seized in Natrona County, 3 were seized in Uinta County, 2 in Carbon County and Sweetwater County, and 1 was seized in Lincoln County. The first laboratory seized in 1999 was seized on January 4th.
- *Trafficking:* The State of Wyoming is crossed by three primary interstate highways, I-80, I-90, and I-25, and is located within 85 miles of Denver, Colorado and Salt Lake City, Utah. I-25 is used frequently to transport methamphetamine from the Southwest border into Colorado and then Wyoming, where it is then shipped east. I-80, which runs east and west, is a natural setting for vehicular drug smuggling. The vast majority of methamphetamine smuggled into the state, is smuggled by illegal Mexican aliens, who deal in multi-pound quantities. Wyoming Regional Enforcement Teams are also

reporting a continuation of the trend of illegal aliens from Mexico being involved in the trafficking of methamphetamine in Wyoming. HIDTA agencies in Wyoming report the majority of methamphetamine coming into the state originates from California and Utah, most commonly via passenger vehicle. A few agencies report a source as Arizona, Denver, Colorado, and Mexico as well as locally produced methamphetamine within Wyoming. Even fewer agencies reported a source as Texas and New Mexico. Airplane was the second most cited route of transportation, followed by parcel and bus (1998 Threat Assessment Survey).

- Wyoming is a vast rural state, crossed by three major interstates and located within 85 miles of two major metropolitan areas, Denver, Colorado and Salt Lake City, Utah. This access has enhanced the symptoms of gang activity in Wyoming. Directly related to Wyoming's interstate access is the escalating problem of drug trafficking. The vast majority of methamphetamine is smuggled into Wyoming by illegal Mexican aliens. Data compiled by the Wyoming Department of Health, Division of Behavioral Health, states that drug arrests have increased 85 percent over the past decade in Wyoming. Over the same time period, assault arrests have increased almost 150 percent in Wyoming. Methamphetamine use is often associated with violent behavior.⁸

Juveniles

- In 1997, forty-two percent of Wyoming high school students had used marijuana some time in their lifetime.

Percent of Wyoming High School Students Using Selected Drugs, 1997⁹

Drug Type and Use	Female	Male	Total
Lifetime marijuana Use(1)	39.6	45.7	42.8
Current Marijuana Use(2)	19.4	27.1	23.4
Lifetime Cocaine Use	9.8	12.7	11.4
Current Cocaine Use	4.5	7.0	5.8
Lifetime "Crack" or "Freebase" Use	8.3	8.6	8.4
Lifetime Illegal Steroid Use	4.1	7.7	6.1
Lifetime Injected Drug Use (3)	3.2	4.1	3.8
Lifetime Use of Other Illegal Drugs (4)	17.8	21.0	19.4
Lifetime Use of Inhalants	25.2	26.3	25.7

1. Lifetime Use = ever tried drug in life

2. Current Use = used drug one or more times in last 30 days before survey

3. Used a needle to inject drugs

4. Other Drugs Include = LSD, PCP, MDMA, Heroin, Methamphetamine, and Mushrooms

Trafficking and Seizures

- In Wyoming, during 1998, there were a total of 854 marijuana plants eradicated. All marijuana was seized from 8 indoor grows. There were a total of 5 arrests, 30 weapons seized, and \$13,500 in assets seized.¹⁰

Enforcement

- In Wyoming, in 1998, there were 1,763 law enforcement employees; 1,168 police officers and 595 civilian employees.¹¹

Courts

- In 1998, 45.1% of the 122 federal defendants in Wyoming were charged with a drug-related offense. A majority of the cases involved methamphetamine (74.5%), followed by marijuana (12.5%), powder cocaine (3.6%), and crack cocaine (1.8%).¹²

Corrections

- The number of prisoners under the jurisdiction of State or Federal correctional authorities in Wyoming, as of June 1999 was 1,634. This was up 14.7% from 1,424 inmates in June 1998.¹³

Treatment

- There were 2,431 drug treatment admissions in Wyoming during 1997. The most common illicit drug was marijuana (423 admissions) followed by methamphetamine (255 admissions).¹⁴

Drug Treatment Admissions in Wyoming, 1997

Drug Type	Number of Admissions
Alcohol	1,119
Alcohol with secondary drug	526
Heroin	11
Cocaine (smoked)	20
Cocaine (other route)	34
Marijuana	423
Methamphetamine	255
Total Admissions	2,431

Sources

¹ US Census Bureau Web site: <http://www.census.gov>

² State of Wyoming web site: www.state.wy.us/

³ ONDCP Web site: www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov

⁴ Ibid

⁵ Drug Court Program Office Web site: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/dcpo

⁶ FBI *Crime in the United States 1998*, October 1999

⁷ Rocky Mountain HIDTA, *Rocky Mountain HIDTA 1998 Threat Assessment*, special run of draft version, February 1999.

⁸ State of Wyoming 1998 Byrne Strategy, February 9, 1999

⁹ US Dept of Health and Human Services, *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance-United States, 1997*, Aug. 1998

¹⁰ Drug Enforcement Administration, *1998 Domestic Cannabis Eradication/Suppression Program*, March 1999

¹¹ Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States 1998*, October 1999

¹² US Sentencing Commission, 1997 Web site: www.ussc.gov/

¹³ Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 1999*, April 2000

¹⁴ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *Treatment Episode Data Set (TEDS) 1992-1997, national Admissions to Substance Abuse Treatment Facilities*, August 1999

This State Profile was prepared by the ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse is funded by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy and is a component of the [National Criminal Justice Reference Service](#). For further information concerning the contents of this profile or other drug policy issues, contact:

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